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BOOKLET SERIES No. 7.

THE S.U.M. IN ... NORTHERN NIGERIA

BY

Rev. R. F. HORTON, D.D.

SUDAN UNITED MISSION

PRICE ONE PENNY.

Sudan United Mission

CHRIST OR MOHAMMED?

CROSS OR CRESCENT?

Object:

TO win for Christ the heathen nations of the Sudan, numbering many millions, who are rapidly going over to Mohammedanism, for the lack of Christian workers

The S.U.M. in Northern Nigeria

By REV. R. F. HORTON, D.D.

Address at the Annual Meeting of the Sudan United Mission, Exeter Hall, May, 1907.

I trust with all my heart that every one of you in this Hall this evening will become a missionary, not to the Sudan, but of the Sudan, and that we shall be able from this platform to give you sufficient information and sufficient reason for the Mission to the Sudan, to inspire you with irresistible zeal, so that you will stir up the interest of Churches, Circles of Prayer, and perhaps young people who may be the missionaries of the future.

The first reason for the Mission in the Sudan is that that vast pagan population in Northern Nigeria is exposed to the missionary enterprise of Mohammedanism. And the expectation that Mahomet will lead to CHRIST is always falsified by fact, as indeed it is wrong in theory, because you must remember that Mahomet succeeded CHRIST. He is not like a forerunner, like Moses or Isaiah, who led the world up to CHRIST, but the reverse of Moses and Isaiah, because he led the people back from CHRIST andaway from Him.

Wherever Mohammedanism goes you sterilise the very forces which are likely to lead to Christ.

It means a bar sinister to the progress of the Gospel. There is no system in the world, no religion likely to resist more the growth of the Christian religion, because its adherents firmly believe that Mohammedanism is an improvement on the Christian religion, and that the prophet Mahomet is the successor, the superior

successor, to the LORD JESUS CHRIST. There is no greater disaster for any population of the kind of the inhabitants of Africa than that the Crescent should precede the Cross. Wherever the Crescent is going, the Cross ought to hasten so as to get in before it, because if the Crescent gets in first it becomes a problem which no one can solve how the Cross can supplant it. I have not time to go very fully into this subject, but will simply say that you can see from the teaching of the Koran that Mohammedanism is the most fatal barrier in the path of spiritual life and Christian truth. Therefore, in the Sudan the great reason why we should give urgency to the Sudan Mission at the present time is because Mohammedan missionaries and Mohammedan traders are carrying the faith of the Crescent among the pagan peoples of that region who, when once they become Mohammedans, will turn out your missionaries of CHRIST. That is the first reason.

But there is a second reason, one which we can at once respond to, and one which all England would respond to if we could only make the whole of our country hear. We have annexed this vast territory of Northern Nigeria. At the beginning of 1900 that population came under the protection of the British flag with all its great advantages. That is to say, our Government is there, as it is in every part of the world, safeguarding the people whom it promises to protect. No one can doubt that it is an unspeakable blessing that the British flag floats over Northern Nigeria, but directly we annexed Northern Nigeria

A responsibility came into every English heart

that holds the faith of JESUS CHRIST. It is not, of course, the duty of the British Government to preach the Gospel. We do not expect that a British High Commissioner should enforce the Gospel message, or indeed the Mohammedan

faith. What we do say is that directly the British flag floats over any portion of the earth, it becomes the duty of British Christians to take to those people, their fellow-subjects, the message of the Cross. The Government is committed to the safeguarding of the country politically, and therefore Christian people are committed to evangelize it. That is the second reason why we should press forward the work of the Sudan Mission.

There is also a third reason, and, if I may say so, that is a peculiarly powerful one in my mind. I was first asked to take up the cause of the Sudan Mission by that devoted and zealous child of God who has been taken away so suddenly and unexpectedly. I well remember when she first came to see me four years ago, hoping that she might induce me, as President of the Free Church Council, to get the whole of the Members of that Council to take up the cause of the Sudan. I was laid aside,

I was ill, and unable to do anything. She visited me once or twice, and with her burning zeal and her extraordinary knowledge of the whole situation, she fired my imagination and touched my conscience. I felt that if ever I got well again, if ever I was permitted to do any work for God at all, I would put the Sudan in a prominent place in my heart and in my service. I remember when she left me after one of those visits—she was looking very worn and literally wore herself out in the cause of the Sudan—she looked up at me and said: 'You are resting: Oh, I wish I could rest.' I think the impression left upon my mind as she said those words was this: 'Yes, you will rest too, and the rest will not be the rest of being laid aside, but the rest of victory.' And though years have passed and she has been removed, we have the inspiration of her zeal andher extraordinary ingenuity and resource, her organizing power, her common sense and

wisdom such as we very seldom see in either sex. These qualities she has taken to the world beyond, and it has been left to us to carry out the work she designed. May we be inspired by her zeal and by her energy to do what we can to fulfil that profound desire of a woman's heart, that

The Sudan may know and be given the message of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

I do not venture to say anything more in the presence of our dear friend Dr. Kumm. I know how much he reverenced her and felt the help and support of her companionship. May I say that we sympathize with him in his deep and irreparable loss, and trust we may be helped to do all in our power to fulfil the great desire of her heart.

May I say down that there is a peculiar difficulty attaching to this Mission, and I think it would be well if I explained it

in this meeting—one of the earliest public meetings this Mission has held.

When Mrs. Kumm and Dr. Kumm first desired to do work in the Sudan, they went to every Missionary Society, I think I may say, to accredited agents of almost every Church in this country, hoping to get some Church or some Society to do the work which obviously ought to be done.

No Society was able to undertake it.

Every Missionary Society admitted that it ought to be done, and every Missionary Secretary expressed his cordial sympathy with every effort to do it. But no Society would undertake it, and no Church could undertake it for the same reason. This Mission has, therefore, had to be founded not on the lines of any Church, not under the auspices of any old-established Society. It has been found necessary to start a new Society, not to multiply agencies, but because no agency existed able to do the work.

The new Society was necessitated by the position.

Of course, everyone can see how difficult it is for a Missionary Society with such a field of work to carry on its enterprise without the assistance of any Church. It is so much more easy for the C.M.S. to do its work in the Sudan, and we pray that the work of that Society there may be extended. It is always easy for the Catholic Church to do its work, because it has strong Church convictions. It is easy for the L.M.S. to do its work because, though not exactly denominational, it has practically the support of all the Congregational Churches of the country. But the Sudan Mission cannot rest upon the convictions of Anglican, Catholic, or Congregationalist; it cannot appeal to any denominational interest or ask for any denominational support. It is obliged to be like the China Inland Mission, a Society which has no denominational

character at all, but purely and simply an evangelistic organization.

This is a source of weakness for such a Society as the China Inland Mission, and the dominant factor must be the leader, the man who is inspired with conviction and who can inspire others by his words and actions. We cherish the hope—we have more than a hope, we have the firm belief—that GOD has raised up the man in Dr. Kumm. We believe that he who has explored in the Sudan, he who has, with Mrs. Kumm, been laying the foundations of this Mission, and who has so many qualifications of speech, mind, heart, and service, may by the Grace of GOD be the Hudson Taylor of the Sudan Mission. I need not remind you that in order to be a Hudson Taylor there must be a work of GOD in a man's heart.

The work must be maintained by prayer

If the enterprise of a single man can take

the place of the work of a great Church or Society.

I feel to-night that we are humbly and earnestly waiting before GOD, asking HIM to consecrate the man for this great task of the Sudan. We bring the need of this Mission and of all the people whom we long to save to the feet of the LORD, and we ask the LORD Himself to fit him to do the work that must be done. I think this meeting should resolve itself, not formally, of course, but actually, into a meeting of united prayer, because this work in the Sudan cannot be done except by spiritual power, and we may be sure, if we are earnest in prayer, the LORD will answer our petitions.

We have to appeal from this platform, and we have to appeal through you to your Churches and to Christian people generally for the right men to give themselves to this work. We want men of a very noble type. We want men, of course, who have health,

strength, enterprise, and enthusiasm, but

We also want men of a wide sympathy.

Because to move in a country where Mohammedans are abroad demands tact, wisdom and knowledge, and to move in a country which is in a delicate position, because it is an English protectorate, demands men who are great Christians, but also politicians ; men who have a full realization of good government and its requirements. We want men rather of the type of Livingstone, men of the type of that great little Scotchman who was the founder of the Uganda Mission — Alexander Mackay. Is there a Mackay in this audience ? Is there a Livingstone ? If not, will you find us a Livingstone or a Mackay ? — a company of Livingstones or a company of Mackays ? Perhaps we shall have to go to Scotland for them, and that would be a misfortune. We want to get these men in England, and I feel sure that, perhaps

in some country place if not in London, we may be able to find an English Livingstone or an English Mackay. Where are you, young Englishmen? You are ever ready to undertake any deed of adventure, or one requiring self-sacrifice, but as yet you are not touched by the spirit of CHRIST, and have not yet

Heard the cry of these Heathen,

'Come over and save us.' Young Livingstones, young Mackays, we want you to volunteer and to go forward in the strength of the LORD to take captive the Sudan for JESUS CHRIST!'

PIONEER EXPERIENCES.

By Mr. BURT, who had just returned from the Sudan.

A few months ago a friend wrote to me, saying, "Is it a fact that the needs of the Sudan are such as they are written and spoken about?" I replied, "No, it is not." You can never state the needs of the Sudan adequately. You cannot impress man, woman, or child with the magnitude of the needs of that country. I have been at work nearly three years, and I say that the needs of the Sudan cannot be told. You may ask what is the need? The great need of the country is CHRIST JESUS, but there is this great danger: Mohammedanism is creeping slowly along the river banks and inland among the tribes, who are pure-living, simple pagan peoples, who I believe would make great monuments to JESUS CHRIST and effective Christian teachers. I cannot

g ve you any adequate idea of the need. Many a time when lying on a bed of sickness I have longed for the MIGHTY GOD to speak to me and show me how the work He has given me to do is to be done. We missionaries have an earnest determination to win, with GOD'S help, in this great fight, and we want Great Britain to make a compact with us and say it must and shall be done in our day.

We want to win the land for Jesus Christ.

We need at once to extend our work.

Several districts which were open are now closed to us. Why? Because you did not send the men and the women. One district has been given over to Roman Catholic missionaries because we in Great Britain did not send the men and women to occupy it. It is a fact that if we had had two men at Tunga, that district would have been saved for JESUS CHRIST and our religion. As it is, it has been allocated

now to the Roman Catholics. I did my best, the other brethren did their best, but we have only one life each.

I have not time to tell you the history of the Mission. It is an intensely interesting history, and has standing in its forefront this glorious fact—that it is founded and maintained on prayer. Many a time when we have been head over ears in difficulties and trials we have put the trouble before the LORD, and the mighty power of GOD has always kept us up and sustained us. We have got over our initial difficulties, and are now in a position to do good work. The mission is sadly undermanned. We must have workers ; we want both men and women, and we pray GOD to send them. What is to be done ? Oh ! that we may rise to the sense of the responsibility.

I could tell you of many encouraging incidents. One old man whom I met and spoke to about the Gospel story said,

"Why did you not come earlier?"

The man was most insistent and most anxious to know the truth. He would send long messages on days when I did not go to see him, saying, "I want to learn, I want the truth, why don't you come and tell me." They are very free with their questions, and frequently say to us, "Is this true? It looks as if it were true; come and tell us again." They realize that JESUS came for them and is willing to save them. Many of the men are most earnest about these things. We have made a start. We want you to give us your prayers.

May I just relate one incident which will show how the good LORD, in answer to your prayers, is watching over us in the field. I was travelling on the river very ill with fever. Our American friend, Dr. Derr, said to me, "Come into my canoe." A few hours later my own canoe, with the boys, the goods and everything, went down. Had I

been in that canoe I should never have been in this Hall to-night. GOD saved me, and I can but realize that He wants me for this work.

Give us your prayers, and GOD shall give you your reward. Brethren, my last words are — pray! pray!! pray!!!

Striking Words!

Would GOD we could lose sight for a time of missionary organisations and every human agency, and could get one clear vision of JESUS CHRIST; then the whole problem of missionary finance and missionary workers would be settled. I do not ask you to pity the heathen, for pity is often a weak thing that spends itself in tears, and then forgets the object of it. But I do ask you, with all my heart, simply to treat JESUS CHRIST right. I submit to you the question: "Is it right to receive the eternal life from those scarred hands, and then give Him only the spare change we happen to have left after we have supplied ourselves with luxuries? Is it right to receive heaven at the price which He

paid and then give Him the odds and ends, the convenient service, the things that cost us little or nothing? The crumbs that fall from your laden table are not enough; they will not do to meet the need of the world that gropes in its ignorance, in its blindness, without GOD. You have no right to crucify the LORD JESUS CHRIST afresh upon the cross of your convenience."

WILLIS R. HOTCHKISS.

R. W. SIMPSON AND CO., LTD., PRINTERS,
RICHMOND AND LONDON.

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(Founded 1904).

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